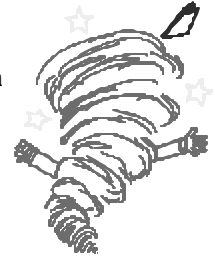


The "NET"

BUSINESS WATCH

TORNADO SEASON IS HERE....Do you have a plan?

Lincoln has been very lucky over the years to not have been devastated by a tornado. We need to be prepared for the unexpected and hope it never happens. A tornado can hit so quickly that you will not have time to think about where to go or what to do, you already need to have a plan in place.



What to do before tornadoes threaten:

- Tornado watch: Tornadoes are possible, remain alert for approaching storms.
- Tornado Warning: a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Take shelter immediately
- Determine places to seek shelter at your place of business. **Make sure all employees know where to go.**
 - *Basement is the best place to go, but if a basement is not available then go to an interior room or hallway on the lowest level. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Go to the center of the room, avoid corners because they attract debris.
 - *Avoid places with wide span roofs, such as, auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways, supermarkets or shopping centers.
 - *Get under a sturdy table or desk putting your arms up to protect you neck and head.
- Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.
- Have a first aid kit available which includes: Flashlight, water, battery operated radio, blankets, sterile dressing, bandaging materials, antibiotic ointment.

Tornado facts:

- A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground.
- A tornado may strike with little warning.
- A tornado may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel.
- The average tornado moves Southwest to Northeast but have been know to move in any direction.
- Forward speed is 30 mph but may vary from stationary to 70 mph w/rotating winds that can reach 300 mph.
- Tornadoes most likely occur between 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., but can occur at any time of the day and night.
- Before a tornado hits the wind may die down & the air may become very still.

BE AWARE

STOLEN CREDIT CARDS

Lincoln has had a rash of billfold & purses stolen from shopping carts. Once the billfold is taken the thief immediately goes to another store and starts charging on the victims credit card. The amount charged to the stolen credit cards is between \$2,000 to \$5,000. It's apparent that the thieves have pre-selected the items to be purchased, returning after they have obtained someone's credit card to actually make the purchase. I realize that the credit card company takes responsibility for the charges on the stolen card, but if employees would take the time to check the signature or ID of the person standing in front of them this could greatly reduce these thefts. If your store has shopping carts and you see customers walking away from the cart and their purse, you might remind them of the risks they're taking.

ON-LINE AUCTIONS

Scams - It has been reported that the highest bidder sends the seller a check for over the amount they purchased the item for. The seller, the honest person they are, sends them a check for the difference along with the merchandise. Later they discover that the check originally sent by the purchaser is counterfeit. The seller lost the amount of the agreed purchase price, the money they returned to the purchaser and the merchandise.

01-2003 thru 12-03**Statistics**

The first number will be the number of reported incidents. The second number will be the percent of clearances.

Commercial Burglaries -

Northwest - 132/ 10.6%

Northeast - 146/ 24.7%

Center - 62/ 24.2%

Southwest - 104/ 12.5%

Southeast - 182/ 5.5%

All Robberies

Northwest 22/ 36.4%

Northeast 26/ 46.2%

Center - 21/ 47.6%

Southwest - 37/ 35.1%

Southeast - 37/ 43.2%

Shoplifting -

Northwest - 353/ 81.3%

Northeast - 470/ 81.1%

Center - 91/60.4%

Southwest - 315/ 77.5%

Southeast - 280/ 67.5%

Forgery -

Northwest - 731/ 49.9%

Northeast - 482/ 56.2%

Center - 182/ 77.5%

Southwest - 308/ 51.6%

Southeast - 827/ 64.7%

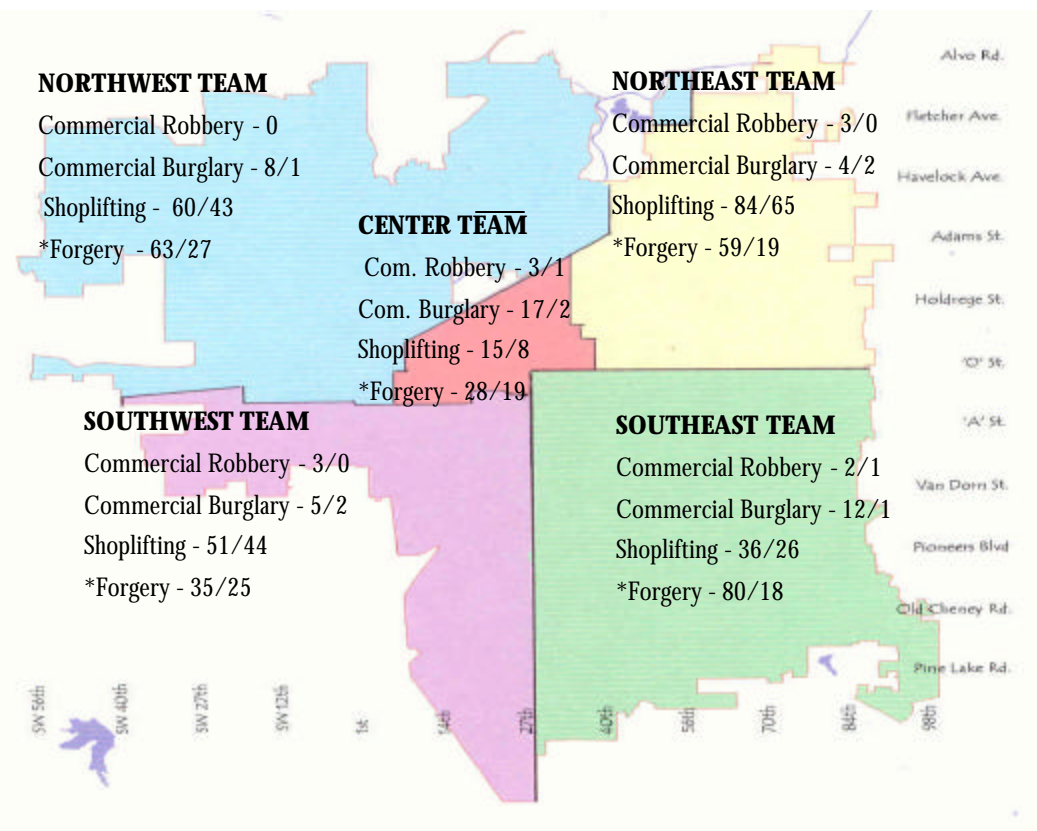
CRIME TRENDS

From 1-1-2004 to 2-29-2004

For more information about the crime trends in your neighborhood go to the city web site.

<http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/police>

The first number will be the number of reported incidents. The second number is how many incidents have been cleared with the person responsible being identified.



*Forgeries include personal, business checks and credit cards

2003 YEAR-END STATISTICS

Through 2003 Lincoln Police Officers responded to 145,158 calls for service. Out of those responses there were 2,189 felony arrests, 22,054 misdemeanor arrests and 1,620 narcotics arrests. Traffic related matters included 9,290 reportable traffic accidents begin investigated, 1,340 DUI arrests, 48,205 official traffic citations and 30,340 warning citations (2,587 official and warnings for traffic signal violations). Notably there were 1,286 residential burglaries which is a 6.8% reduction from the previous year. Similarly the 4,412 larcenies from autos were 4.4% fewer than in 2002. We hope we can attribute these reductions to heightened awareness and proactive action on the part of citizens. Arrests, or clearance rates, for these offenses remained consistent with last year.

Another one of our very important programs, CRIME STOPPERS (475-3600), showed marked success through 2003. During the year there were 1,435 calls made to Crime Stoppers. Because of those calls 527 cases were solved, 402 arrests were made and amazingly, \$380,077 worth of property was recovered. Crime Stoppers paid out a total of \$23,300 to callers whose tips led to these successes.

EMPLOYEE THEFT

Last issue we talked about prevention of employee theft. We will continue with methods employees use to steal from the company.

Refund Fraud:

- Employee keeps sales receipt from a previous sale and uses that receipt to later process a refund for themselves or a friend.
- Employee uses fictitious names on a refund. You might keep an eye on who is making refunds. If one person seems to make a lot more refunds than the others, then it is time to take a closer look to see why.

At the cash register:

- Employees ring up a lower price then marked but charges the customer the original price, pocketing the difference. They may put the money into the register to take it out later. If you see a piece of paper in or around the register, it may be a tally of how much extra money is in the register.
- Over charging the customer, if the customer questions the amount, it was just a mistake.
- Be suspicious of an excessive number of "no sale" or voids at the register.
- Employee shouldn't bring bags or purses into the sales area. Employee should not ring up their own sales.

Upper level theft:

- Over billing expense accounts
- Creating a fictitious payroll account for a non-exist employee.
- Adjusting accounting figures.
- Adding more hours to a pay sheet than actually worked.

People are always coming up with new ideas to steal from the company. It can be a one time small amount incident or it can occur over years with thousands of dollars lost. If you suspect something is happening, step back and watch to see what's going on. If there is criminal activity, take immediate action and call the police, don't ignore it.

PARKING LOT SECURITY

Larceny from vehicles is the #1 crime in Lincoln. Over 4,500 thefts from vehicles occurred last year, thousands of dollars in stereo equipment, gym bags, purses, billfolds, checkbooks, (to name a few) are gone in seconds.. There are some steps that business owners can do to better secure their parking lots:

- Parking lot should be well lit.
- The lot should be visible to the public and to personnel inside the building. Reception area should have a view of the lot.
- If employees go outside for lunch or to smoke have the designated area by the parking lot, that way employees are visible to any potential thieves in the area.
- Keep landscaping well trimmed - bushes not higher than 3' and trees no lower than 6'. Fencing around the parking lot which would limit access.
- Call the police on any suspicious activity/persons.

How employees can assist in preventing thefts from vehicles.

- Lock your car.
- Take anything of value (stereo's, CD's, purses/billfolds, cell phones, brief cases)out of your vehicle or place it out of view, preferably in the trunk. If a stereo is a pull-out or has a removable face, remove it.
- Record the brands, model numbers & serial number from your electronics and accessories. Keep an inventory list of your property.
- Invest in a security system if you feel the value of the contents in your car justifies the cost.

THE "NET" BUSINESS

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT
CRIME PREVENTION GROUP
575 S. 10TH St.
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Return Service

SUMMER IS QUICKLY APPROACHING....Adding additional problems for business owners.

As Spring fever hits, everyone wants to be outside enjoying the weather. Some activities are constructive others are destructive.

As business owners you are faced with some additional problems: liability concerns, trespassing, littering, vandalism, theft, or burglary. As the weather warms up people are out later at night. They may be looking for a place to stop and socialize. Your parking lot may be ideal for such an activity.

A proactive approach to prevent these kinds of problems is best. Consider any kind of design or environmental barrier that would dissuade people from congregating on your property especially during the hours the business is closed. Make sure the exterior, parking lot and entrance are well lit at night. Post "no trespassing" or "no loitering" signs that are visible upon approach or entrance of your property.

To facilitate the police department's response to trespassing or disturbances on your property, please write a letter to the captain of your team area (Southeast, Southwest, Northeast, Northwest or Center). State in your letter that it is your intent to have any violators cited or arrested for any criminal activity on your property. Include your business name, address and phone number, the name and phone number of an after hours contact person, and where your "No Trespassing" signs are posted. If your business is posted and LPD has your letter of intent on file, officers can more easily make on-view responses to problems without having to wait for a complaint to be called in.

To determine what team you're on check the map on page 2.



Crime Free Dollars



AAA Insurance and the Lincoln Police Department are teaming up again to make Lincoln's young adults aware that they are the most likely victims of Larceny of Auto Accessories. During May 3-13, LPD will be checking cars in the parking lots of the 5 public high schools to see who is locking their doors and taking out or hiding any items of value. For the cars that comply, their license number will be put into a drawing for one lucky student at each of the high schools to win \$50. If you have any kids that drive to school, remind them that they should always lock their car doors and take out anything of value and between May 3-13 they could put \$50 in their pockets for doing so.